

Carrousel Is Sought for the Mall

By Jack Anderson

The Smithsonian Institution would like to install, of all things, a Washington Merry-Go-Round among the staid museums and monuments on the Mall.

It would feature the sweetest calliope music this side of Heaven and the most rollicking animals ever to prance in a circle.

The dignified curators of the Smithsonian have already acquired America's most famous, most fabulous merry-go-round. The wondrous machine was built in a saner age by the Dentzels, emigrants who became for carrouseis what the Steinways were for pianos.

G. A. Dentzel, and after him his son, William, lovingly handcrafted the most noble, pawing horses, the most ram-bunctious rabbits and the most lovable pigs that ever whirled round and round.

The Dentzels' proudest, turn-of-the-century steeds were displayed at Woodside Park in Philadelphia, where the customers would come to "oh" and "ah." Historians and circus buffs have hailed the children's masterpiece at Woodside as "the most joyful carrousel in America."

But in time, the happy tunes of the calliope were stilled and the enchanting animals were displaced by a housing project. The merry-go-round

was boxed and moved to Long Island, then to New Jersey. In the process, the beautiful beasts were bruised, bumped and broken.

To preserve them, the Smithsonian Institution bought them for \$20,000 in 1966 and stored them in an ancient brick warehouse in Massachusetts. And there they have languished for seven years, their bright colors fading, their happy features cracking.

Revive Laughter

Now the Smithsonian would like to restore the delightful antique and revive the childish laughter it produced. While mothers are ogling the dresses of the Presidents' wives and fathers are inspecting the space capsules, the Smithsonian would like to provide a relic of the past for the small children to enjoy.

Lean government budgets, however, have no funds for children's carrouseis. So if America wants its most famous merry-go-round to revolve again, then the money will have to be raised privately.

It will cost \$81,000 to restore the 42 horses, four rabbits, two pigs, two goats, 36 clown heads, 18 cherubs and countless acanthus leaves. Still more is needed for the 2,400 lightbulbs and the many mirrors that glint and sparkle. The mechanical parts must be repaired or replaced with

handmade machinery. A transparent, all-weather housing is needed to midwinter visitors so Washington can give children a chance to ride the marvelous menagerie.

Assistant Smithsonian Secretary Charles Blitzer has reported to the Dentzel family that the total cost would reach \$500,000. "Unfortunately," wrote Blitzer, "this is not the sort of project for which Congress is apt to appropriate funds. Therefore, we have been attempting unsuccessfully to find one or more donors who will share our enthusiasm and excitement..."

The Smithsonian has asked us, as proprietors of the Washington Merry-Go-Round column, to help promote the project. How could we resist? Readers who have taken their children to Washington, or plan to come, or simply long for those good old days of the steam calliope, are invited to slip a dollar bill, or more, into an envelope and send it to:

Merry-Go-Round, Smithsonian, Washington, D.C. 20560.

Bugging Business

Samuel Dash, the law professor selected by Sen. Sam Ervin (D-N.D.) to conduct the Watergate investigation, assumes his Senate offices will be bugged. "I don't know whether the offices we get will be bugged," he told his last class at the Georgetown Law Center, "we'll have to assume they probably are."

Dash knows a good deal about eavesdropping. In the 1950s, he did a comprehensive study of eavesdropping, funded by the Ford Foundation. He learned from his research always "to act on the assumption that your phone is tapped."

Widespread eavesdropping, he told us, has had a chilling effect on American society. It strikes, he said, at "what America stands for—that feeling of being free."

He told of an interview with a U.S. senator, who said he would leave his office and walk two blocks to a pay booth to make an important telephone call. He would also change booths every day in order not to be followed. "That's a helluva way," said Dash, "for a U.S. senator to have to make a call."

He also recounted an episode, uncovered during his own investigation, involving taps on the phones of Supreme Court Justices. The Federal Communications Commission expert, who was part of the inspection squad, was so shaken over the discovery that he instructed all members of the squad not to discuss it. The taps were placed by investigators for two "industrial giants" worried about the outcome of a court case Dash said.

He appears to be the right man to get to the bottom of the Watergate bugging.

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